

REMARKS

In the office action of January 6, 2005, a numbering error was noted in the claims. As a result, the Examiner has renumbered claims 11-14 as claims 10-13. The Applicant has adopted this renumbering and in addition has corrected the claim dependency of claims 11-13.

In the office action there was an objection to the numbering of "hub 44" on page 7, last line. This has been amended to --hub 45--, as suggested in the office action.

Claims 1-13 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter. In particular, the Examiner noted some indefiniteness between the terms "switch actuating mechanism" and a "switching interface". As a result, the specification has been amended in several instances to refer to the switch actuating mechanism as a whole as element 80, and a switching interface as number 81. The interface, in fact, includes the top surface of the rotary member which is part of the actuating mechanism 80 and the aperture therein. This was supported by the description "Summary of the Invention," page 2, last paragraph bridging over to page 3, where it states "a first interface for various switching accessories provided by a socket which is part of the mechanism for actuating and de-actuating the switch contacts." As a result of the amendments to the description, no amendment of the drawing is seen to be required.

The Examiner noted that the term "the door handle" lacked proper antecedent basis in claim 1, line 20. The Examiner also noted that the term "the front door" in claim 5, line 17 lacked proper antecedent basis. By the amendment, antecedents have been provided in claim 1, lines 2-3 and in claim 5, line 2, respectively. The undersigned appreciates the Examiner calling these matters to attention so that they could be corrected.

The Office Action noted some indefiniteness arising from the term "selected from" in claim 1, line 9 and similar language in certain of the other claims. In addition, the Office Action rejected claims 1-8 as being unpatentable over Grunert et al., U.S. Patent No. 5,288,958, which basically shows a coupling mechanism and a complex linkage to a rotary switch handle that can be located on the door of an enclosure.

Claims 9-13 were rejected as unpatentable over Grunert et al., U.S. Patent No. 5,288,958 in view of Pieroneck et al., U.S. Patent No. 5,452,201. In this regard, it was noted that Pieroneck showed modules 40, 42 and 52 which operated in conjunction with a disconnect switch 46 over a network, the network being represented in U.S. Patent No. 5,452,201 by certain connecting wires or conductors 14, 16.

By the amendment, the "selected from" language has been deleted from the claims, so that the various assemblies in the claims are positively recited in combination. This results in claim 1 with a combination including a switch actuating mechanism, a switching interface and two switching assemblies. Therefore, the claims are no longer seen to be anticipated or suggested by the references cited in the office action. The claims which depend from claim 1 add further modular assemblies not seen in combination in the prior art.

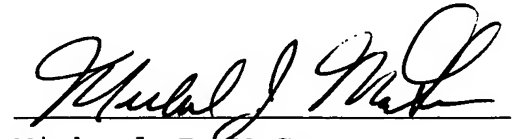
The same can be said of the remaining claims, that once the "selected from" language is removed, the claims no longer compare to the references cited in the office action. In particular, with respect to claim 9, the claim has been amended to emphasize that the network connection module, not only is physically attached to a switch body with the other modules (recited in original claim 9), which clearly distinguishes from Pieroneck et al, but also that the fourth module "has the same form factor as any one of the three switch modules," which clearly is not the case in Pieroneck et al.

CONCLUSION

In view of the Amendment and Remarks, reconsideration of the patent application is respectfully requested. After the amendment, claims 1-13 are now pending and a Notice of Allowance for these claims is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

By:



Michael J. McGovern
Quarles & Brady LLP
411 East Wisconsin Avenue
Milwaukee, WI 53202-4497
(414) 277-5725
Attorney of Record